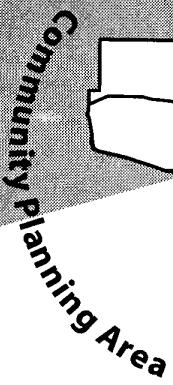


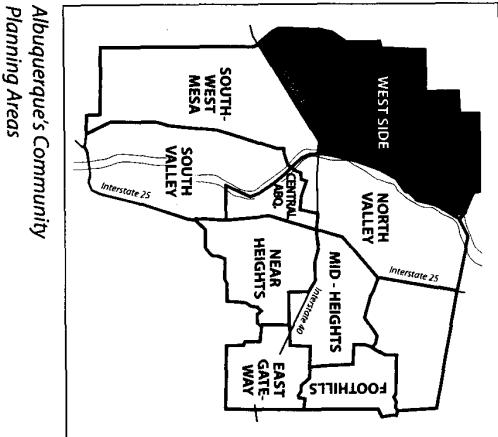
West Side



BLUEPRINT for ACTION

REVISED DRAFT
March 25, 1998

Table of Contents



Albuquerque's Community Planning Areas

Executive Summary 1

Introduction 3

Topics:
Purpose of Blueprint for Action,
Planning Process, Role of Partnership,
Next Steps

City of Albuquerque's Community Conditions and 5-Year Goals 5

Topics:
Summary of North Albuquerque's Conditions by City's 5-Year Goals

North Albuquerque's Community Profile

History and Development 7

People 10

Demographics

Family, Children and Youth

Seniors and Special Populations

Community Identity 14

Transportation and Infrastructure 17

Housing 23

Recreation 24

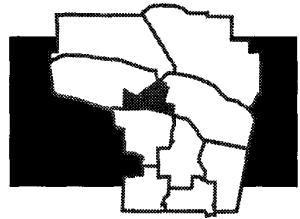
Crime and Safety 27

Commercial, Business, and Job Development 28

Environmental Protection and Resource Conservation 30

Priority Issues and Recommended Actions 35

Topics:



Executive Summary

Introduction

**City of Albuquerque's
5-Year Goals and
Central Albuquerque's
Community Conditions**

Executive Summary

The rapid development of the West Side has raised concerns particularly about the inadequacies of the infrastructure (roads, drainage, water and sewer, parks, schools, etc.) and the inability of the City government to keep up with the demand for more development in the area. Most of the growth has been residential with many of the residents going elsewhere in the City to work. More jobs occur on the east side (one for every two persons) of the River than on the west side (one for every four persons).

The West Side Community Blueprint is an initial attempt to identify some of the most pressing priorities of the area from the point of view of the various community representatives. Although most of the concerns and issues are also addressed in the recently adopted West Side Strategic Plan and in some of the Area Sector Plans, these documents primarily address the physical development of the area, such as land use, urban design, etc.

The Blueprint is a document which attempts to not only deal with the physical development of the area, but to include and organize other area priorities, such as the social services and other public services required in the area. The Blueprint serves as one of the building blocks for revising and updating the City's Comprehensive Plan. By comparing all the other Blueprints from the other planning areas and eventually all the Area Plans, common issues, strengths and opportunities should surface and lead to adoption of City and region-wide policies.

The first part of the Blueprint provides introductory and background information on how and why this document is being produced by each of the planning areas.

The second part of the Blueprint organizes the key findings about each of the Planning Areas according to the City's Goals. They will enable the establishment of baseline data of community conditions that can be used to evaluate community progress in addressing these conditions over time.

The "Community Identity" section describes the West Side and its significant features. The West Side, greater Albuquerque's fastest growing area, extends from I-40 north to the Bernalillo County northern boundary below the community of Rio Rancho and Corrales. The West Side, area-wise, is the largest planning area. The area contains several unique environmental features, such as the petroglyphs, important to the entire metropolitan area in terms of physical form and quality of life.

"Transportation and Infrastructure", the area's biggest concern, and the most discussed issue among West Side residents is presented in the next section of the Blueprint. In particular, the transportation needs of the area calls for a full range of transportation opportunities rang-

10,000 years ago. Human activity continues in the area with new subdivisions of mostly single-family homes extending to the west and north. The West Side, with its abundance of vacant land, will continue to provide a majority of Albuquerque's future expansion.

ing from efficient, cost-effective transit, improved arterial roads, a well-planned system of bicycle and pedestrian trails and alternatives such as car pooling and telecommuting.

The section on "Housing" provides a sketch of the housing situation on the West Side. Most homeowners on the West Side pay a higher portion of their income for housing and this may be a reflection of the higher cost of owning housing on the West Side since poverty indicators are not high in the area. Even then, the City needs to continue aggressive implementation of affordable housing, acquiring and developing or redeveloping vacant or abandoned sites (in some cases, in joint partnership with private developers) to provide, in mixed income units (multi-family and single family) when possible, more low and moderate cost housing for both renters and home buyers.

The "Recreation" section provides a listing of some of the cultural/recreational, programs/events and parks facilities on the West Side.

The "Crime and Safety" section provides data on residents' reaction toward crime and presents data on crime activity in the area. The data indicates that the West Side's crime problem is considered the least serious as the other areas. Almost similar results were found for crime related activity, such as problems with

gangs, spray painting, litter, drugs and drinking.

In the "Commercial, Business and Job Development" section, particularly the business and commercial situation is discussed. Although recently, the area developed its own employment center, the Cottonwood Mall, the majority of people who live on the West Side are crossing over the River to the east side to work since most of the jobs are located on the east side of the River. To lessen the commuting and traffic pattern of going across the River for jobs, the West Side needs to develop more jobs.

In presenting the final profile of the West Side, in the section, "Environmental Protection and Resource Conservation", several environmental and conservation related issues are presented. These include the Petroglyphs National Monument, the various archaeological site, the air pollution, noise and the preservation of the bosque and the views within and without the area.

In the final section, the priority issues are presented. Most of it is growth related. Continued growth with associated infrastructure and urban services development is one of the primary issues that the West Side faces. To address these concerns, in 1994, the City of Albuquerque began the development of the West Side Strategic Plan which proposes a

framework for urban form made up of neighborhoods and communities where shopping, employment and recreation are available nearer people's homes. The plan offers strategies for coordinating public investment in infrastructure and proposes design guidelines that encourage new development that will complement the area's scenic qualities.

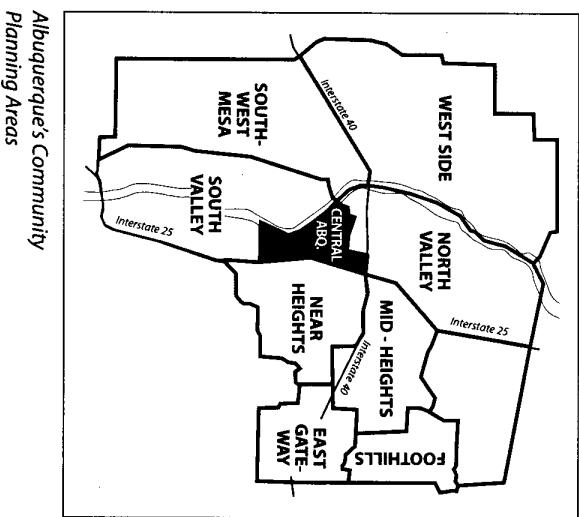
During the public meetings for the West Side Strategic Plan, residents emphasized their interest in having adequate services while retaining the special features of the West Side. In other words, not only is Albuquerque sprawling rapidly, but current plans call for more of the same.

There is no question whether the West Side will grow. The questions are how much growth is sustainable or desirable and where that growth should occur. The answers to those questions will affect the quality of life of the West Side and define the sense of place for future generations.

Managing future growth in the area is a task of community leadership. The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County have a unique window of opportunity to direct and manage the area's future and the citizens want local leaders to seize this opportunity and move forward with all due speed to achieve their goals.



Introduction



Albuquerque's Community Planning Areas

Community-Based Planning

In 1996, the City of Albuquerque began doing business a new way. Based on information gathered at public workshops held in 1993-94, the Albuquerque Community Identity Program was prepared. It was adopted by the Mayor and City Council in 1995 to facilitate effective planning and service delivery to all parts of Albuquerque.

The Albuquerque Community Identity Program divides Albuquerque and parts of Bernalillo County into ten communities to facilitate broad-based public involvement in planning. To help accomplish this, partnerships of City Councillors, City government staff, representatives from public schools, neighborhoods, businesses and institutions, and others have formed to assess community conditions, prioritize issues, and work together to solve community problems. A community planner has been assigned to each community. Most partnerships have chosen priority work for 1997.

98. With city staff assistance, the partnerships design approaches and solutions, network to find public and private resources, and work to direct changes to City policy, planning, and spending for projects and programs in their community planning areas.

The Public Works Department, Family and Community Services Department, and the Capital Implementation Program's Parks, Open Space and Trails section each have their own community planner to help coordinate sub-area planning and implementation. Interagency coordination is further facilitated through a Government Response Team comprised of representatives from the Mayor's Office, City Council Office, and the City Departments.

The Community Planning Partnerships

The Partnerships formed between May and November, 1996, City Councillors serve as co-chairs. Currently, members include the principals of high schools and representatives of neighborhood associations, the Senior Citizen Centers, and business organizations. Names are continually added to the mailing list. During the first year, meetings were held almost every month in most areas. In their second year the partnership may select a core group of people

to meet regularly, schedule less frequent large meetings, and concentrate on frequent focussed sessions with more interested parties to work on projects, policy proposals, and other community priorities.

The Foothills Partnership spent the first half of their initial year identifying community strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats, discussing their desires for the community's future, and choosing priorities to tackle.

The Community Blueprints for Action

This blueprint is one of nine. Each blueprint describes a community planning area and analyzes its priority issues. The Blueprint presents an analysis of conditions in the community using existing information and ideas. This information was compiled from extensive Partnership discussion, input from community meetings and City departments, and a variety of existing plans and reports. Because information is taken from many sources, it should be interpreted with caution. For example, census data is compiled by tract, block group, and extrapolation methods. Nonetheless, we believe the major points derived from the analyses are useful.

Information comes from several sources:

- The Community Planning Partnership
- Youth planning meetings organized by the Office of Neighborhood Coordination
- Youth planning meetings organized by the Cultural and Recreation Department
- Community meetings for the HUD 5-Year Plan
- Many City documents including *the Albuquerque Progress Report, the Sustainability Indicator Report, and the Area Sector Plans* to name just a few
- Special Purpose Workshops (sector plans, CPTED, etc.)
- City staff field observations

Blueprint Contents

First, community conditions are summarized under each of the City's seven goals. Next, a profile of the community's conditions, issues, and key findings are presented for nine topics. Finally, priority issues and actions being taken to address them are discussed.

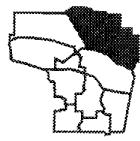
What Is Next?

These initial renditions of the Blueprints will be revised and enhanced over the next year in order to develop them into Community Area

Plans. The area plans may be presented to the Environmental Planning Commission and the City Council for adoption as Rank II plans. Each area plan will incorporate all adopted Area and Sector Development Plans.

The Community Area Plans should serve as building blocks for revising and updating the City's Rank I Comprehensive Plan. By comparing all the Blueprints and eventually all the Area Plans, common issues, strengths, and opportunities should surface and lead to city and region-wide policies. The Area Plans will be fully updated periodically and may have individual components updated more frequently.

The Blueprint is intended to provide a basis for actions which can improve quality of life. If you have questions or want to participate in planning for the community, call your Community Planner at 924-3860.



City of Albuquerque's 5-Year Goals and the West Side's Community Conditions

The City of Albuquerque adopted the following seven City Goals in 1994. They are used to set one-year objectives for City Government and to organize annual budget requests. They are also used as the basis for performance review documented in the Albuquerque Progress Report, one of the City's primary evaluation tools.

The Community Blueprints for Action organize the key findings about each of Albuquerque's Community Planning Areas under these citywide goals. This will help establish baseline measures of community conditions that can be used to evaluate community progress.



City of Albuquerque's 5-Year Goals and the West Side's Community Conditions

Goal 1/Subgoal A: Enhance the basic social contract/Enhance the lives of youth by supporting stable families.

- Address the drop-out rate at various schools in the area.
- Build more schools in the area.

Goal 2: Improve public Safety services.

- Although crime is not a problem, neighborhoods need to work closely with the Police Department to maintain the low crime rate in the area.

Goal 3/Subgoal A: Balance new and existing infrastructure/Maintain system capacity relative to growth.

- Resolve the issue of the extension of Paseo del Norte through the Petroglyphs National Monument.
- Develop an interim infrastructure plan to relieve congestion at a level consistent with the City's growth policies.
- As the only other North-South corridor other than Coors Boulevard, complete Unser Boulevard to Rio Rancho.
- Plan and develop alternative modes of transportation, i. e., transit, light rail, bike lanes/paths, pedestrian traffic lanes/paths, etc.

- Develop better drainage/ponding facilities.
- Provide parks and open space as development occurs.
- Provide more recreation facilities, such as swimming pools, skating/boarding facilities, ball fields (basketball, soccer, etc.).

Goal 4/Subgoal A/Subgoal B: Achieve sustainable development/Sustainable regional development/Effective, affordable and diverse intermodal transportation.

- Pursue planned, managed growth instead of leapfrog, sprawl development.
- Achieve better coordination between City and County and other local jurisdictions on development issues, such as water and air quality, traffic, etc.
- Plan and develop alternative modes of transportation, i. e., transit, light rail, bike lanes/paths, pedestrian traffic lanes/paths, etc.

- Promote and create more employment for youth in the area.

Goal 6/Subgoal A/Subgoal B: Adopt and implement economic vitality strategy/Create a strong business climate/Jobs with a future and workforce prepared.

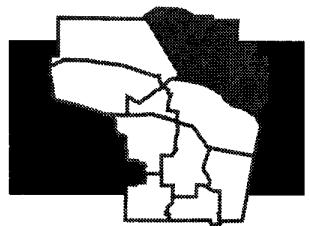
- Establish a jobs skills center in or near the area, preferably in the Atisco Business Park (south of I-40).
- Attract and create more business (export type) development in activity centers on the West Side to balance out west to east commute to work across the River.

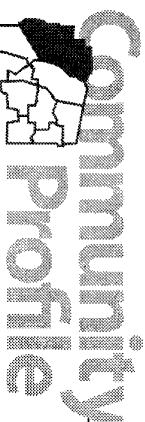
- Clean up the Spartan site and other contaminated areas.
- Preserve and protect the Petroglyphs, the Bosque and archaeological sites.
- Preserve the views of the Bosque, the escarpment, the volcanoes, and the Sandias.

Goal 7: Foster the expression and appreciation of Albuquerque's cultures.

- Develop methods to enhance the unique identity (Petroglyphs, views, Bosque, etc.) of the West Side.

**the West Side's
Community Profile**





History and Development

History and Development

According to archeological findings, the first known human activity on the West Side started over 10,000 years ago. Archeologists have found remains of campfires and stone chips from tool making left by ancient hunters. These hunters apparently pursued the animals which roamed the area near shallow lakes which dotted the grassy mesa west of the volcanoes. As the climate grew warmer the lakes disappeared and so did the large animals. Other people came into the area over the next thousands of years and tended food crops as evidenced by thousand-year-old pithouses and primitive farming sites along the volcanic escarpment and farther west. By the year 1300, the descendants of the builders of the pithouses and small rock dams were building large adobe villages near their fields along the flood plain of the Rio Grande River.

In the 1500's and 1600's, Spanish explorers and colonists began coming into the area from Mexico.

The Pueblos, who had lived in the area for years, eventually yielded much of the agricultural land to the new settlers. For over 200 years, the West Mesa was predominantly grazing country for the cattle and sheep belonging to residents of two early 18th century farming villages, Atrisco to the south and Alameda in the north. One of the many trails comprising the Camino Real traversed the hills on the West Side of the River. To reach the Villa of Albuquerque on the east side of the Rio Grande River, Atrisquenos usually crossed the River bed on foot since the Rio Grande was "nowhere navigable and everywhere fordable," according to one 19th century writer.

After New Mexico became a territory of the United States in 1846, several attempts to establish a road across the mesa to the west failed. Even the railroad could not deal with the physical barrier presented by the steep slopes and sand hills and routed their tracks south to Los Lunas, where they turned west through a break in the sand hills. The railroad, which reached Albuquerque in 1880, cre-

[Goal 3] For infrastructure, equitably balance new construction,

maintenance and repair.

[Goal 4] Achieve sustainable development and balanced development and redevelopment, including infill development.

[Goal 6] Adopt and pursue implementation of an economic vitality strategy.

ated a new town east of the old Villa de Albuquerque and as the new town grew, outstripped the town of Santa Fe in population by 1910.

The expanding use of the automobile gave Albuquerque residents more mobility, but for the most part the City grew east and north with the River as a barrier. At the end of the 19th century, the first bridge across the River at Barelas connected the communities of old Albuquerque and Atrisco. Like an earlier bridge near Old Town, this bridge was washed away by a flood, but unlike the Old Town bridge, the Barelas bridge was soon rebuilt; it was a crucial link in the State's first north-south highway. In the 1920's, a few newcomers bought and ranched

large holdings on the mesa north of Atrisco, but it was not until bridges were built across the Rio Grande River at Central Avenue in 1931 and across the Rio Puerco in 1933 that a useable highway led west from the City and people began to move west in significant numbers.

After World War II, the pace of movement west and development increased on the West Side of the River. The College of St. Joseph was built on

the bluffs above the River in 1951; Coors Boulevard was extended south of Central Avenue in the 1940's and north of St. Joseph's after 1957. The construction of Interstate 40 in the 1960's accelerated housing construction. Large residential communities were platted and lots sold as subdivisions sprang up, such as Paradise Hills (1962), Rio Rancho (1963), Snow Vista-Westgate (1963), College Heights (now known as Taylor Ranch - 1964), Volcano Cliffs (1964), and La Luz (1968).

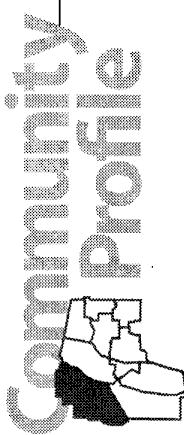
Limited development occurred on the old Atrisco grant lands. The grant had been patented in 1905 and grant officials had begun leasing grant land in the 1920's (the first West Mesa Airport was located on grant land). Using a new 1967 State law, the Westland Development Company became the owner of the old Atrisco grant and began more systematic development of the lands. In the 1970's, concerned citizens began the drive to save the volcano area from development. This eventually led to the establishment of the Petroglyph National Monument.

The availability of large tracts of land at lower costs than that of the east side of the River prompted a flurry of new development adjacent to existing neighborhoods such as Taylor Ranch, La Luz and Paradise Hills. From 1980 to 1990 the population of the West Side grew at a rate three times that of the rest of the City. While the older communities have their own character and flavor, the newer neighborhoods lend a more homogeneous, suburban feel to the West Side.

This residential growth continues, with new subdivisions of mostly single-family homes extending to the west and north. Large apartment complexes are also rising in the area, adding to the base of housing available for new West Side residents. Commercial and industrial development, parks and community facilities have lagged behind home construction, but with the construction of Cottonwood Mall, the State's largest regional mall and its associated development, many Albuquerque businesses have opened West Side branches, concentrating in the area along Coors Boulevard between Paseo Del Norte and NM 528.

The West Side Partnership has expressed concern that planning tools have not adequately served the City and the West Side's needs in particular. They feel that the policies of the West Side Strategic Plan have not made a difference, and that the Environmental Planning Commission has made decisions contrary to the Plan. The Partnership would like to become more involved in helping implement policies to slow down growth on the West Side, track development cases, and to follow up on programs and projects impacting the West Side.

Key Findings:	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Westside is the fastest growing area of the City of Albuquerque. • A significant amount of land is yet to be developed, even within the developing areas. It is anticipated that development will eventually continue westward all the way to the Rio Puerco where the Canoncito Navajo and the Laguna Indian Reservation boundaries begin. • The only current constraint to further development to the west is the lack of availability of utilities and other infrastructure and the cost associated with the development of such infrastructure. • The West Side Strategic Plan recently adopted by the City, should provide guidance for the continued growth of the West Side. • Residential development is primarily single family housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the West Side Community Planning Partnership in developing and monitoring implementation of the West Side Strategic Plan. • Protect the Petroglyphs National Monument and other irreplaceable natural resources of the area, such as the Bosque.



People and Demographics

[Goal 3] Enhance the basic social contract by enhancing the lives of youth and seniors, supporting the family, fostering and maintaining stable neighborhoods and providing affordable housing.
[Goal 6] Adopt and pursue implementation of an economic vitality strategy.

People/Demographics

The West Side will continue to provide a majority of Albuquerque's future expansion. It has been estimated that 73% of Albuquerque's growth between 1980 and 1990 was a result of natural increase (births minus deaths) and a majority of the net migration to the West Side has come from other parts Bernalillo County.

The estimated 1995 population of the West Side is approximately 45,687 which is about nine percent of the City total of 497,031. (Source: Albuquerque Citizen Satisfaction: Police Service Delivery 1997).

Age of the Population

West Side residents are generally younger (West Side median age is about 28 years versus about 31 for the City) and more family oriented than the City as a whole. Of the residents of the area, almost 30% are children under the age of eighteen: 10% are

under the age of five and 20% are between five and 17 years of age. Residents over 65 years of age constitute about six percent of the population, one of the lowest proportions of all the community planning areas.

Ethnicity

The ethnic composition of the West Side is about 60% White and 31% Hispanic. Native Americans constitute over 6%, the highest proportion, although second in terms of the actual number of Native Americans, of all the planning areas in the City. Blacks comprise 2% and Asians make up about 1%.

Income/Welfare/Poverty

The median family income for the entire Albuquerque area is \$35,646. Of the households on the West Side, 12% earn less than 46% of that amount, third lowest of all the planning areas of

the City. About 14% of households earn between 46% and 77% of the City's median family income. The rest of the households earned more than the median family income.

On the West Side, 353 households receive public assistance income. This is 3% of all West Side households and the third lowest of all the planning areas of the City. Of the area's residents, about seven percent live in poverty. This ranks third lowest of the ten community planning areas. The West Side has a low proportion of persons and households in Poverty. Of those in poverty status, Native Americans make up 26% of that population. The proportion of Native Americans in the population is the largest of all the planning areas.

Of single female headed households, only 12% live in poverty. Of those, 57% have children between five and 17 years of age (a high proportion compared to other planning areas). Another 18% have children under five years of age. Of the total unrelated individuals in the area, 8% live in poverty which is the lowest of all the planning areas.

Employment

Of those in the labor force, 96% are employed (third highest of all the planning areas), and about 4% are unemployed (third lowest of all the planning areas).

Demographics Comparison between
West Side and City Wide

Demographics Comparison between
West Side and City Wide

Key Findings:	
• The Westside is the fastest growing area of the City of Albuquerque.	• The only current constraint to further development to the west is the lack of availability of utilities and other infrastructure and the cost of such infrastructure.
• A significant amount of land is yet to be developed, even within the developing areas. It is anticipated that development will eventually continue westward all the way to the Rio Puerco where the Canoncito Navajo and the Laguna Indian Reservation boundaries begin.	• The West Side Strategic Plan, recently adopted by the City, should provide guidance for the continued growth of the West Side.
• Residential development is primarily single family housing.	

Family, Children, Youth and Education

West Side area have not graduated from high school. About 26% are high school graduates, 27% have some post secondary education (the highest proportion of all the planning areas) and 30% are college graduates (the third highest proportion of all the planning areas).

All public schools within the area are in the Albuquerque Public School (APS) District. Six elementary school facilities serve the area. Sierra Vista Elementary School primarily serves the Paradise Hills area while the Marie Hughes School serves the area near the Petroglyph Park. Chaparral Elementary School services the central portion of the area and Lavaland Elementary School serves the southernmost area. One middle school is located in the area and two others located in adjacent areas serve the West Side. These are the Adams and Taylor schools. Although, these schools service the area, both schools are located outside the area. Taylor Middle School is located on the east side of the Rio Grande River, near Fourth Street and Ranchito Road. Adams Middle School is located east of South Coors Boulevard, immediately south of I-40. Cibola High School is the only high school located within the area. Cibola High School is located adjacent to the Alameda Airport near Paradise Hills.

There are no City funded child care sites in the area. Many of the children with no alternatives are sent to child care in the Southwest Mesa area or to other parts of the City. Child care services are also available from private providers, and it is unknown, at this time, whether these providers have low-cost or subsidized programs. There is a need to assess child care services, pre-school and afterschool and summer activities including cost, capacity, scheduling, and age-appropriateness. The Family and Community Services Department has a city-wide needs and location study underway for community centers and child care facilities.

The West Side population has a relatively high educational level. About 9% of residents in the

There are presently no educational institutions on the West Side other than the public schools. Branches of the Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute (TVI) serve the area from other public facilities, such as the West Mesa High School.

The West Side has a high proportion of married couple families, and there are more families with more children living on the West Side. Of all families living in this area, 83% are married couple families, the third highest proportion of all the planning areas. The West Side has the second highest proportion among all the planning areas of children under five years of age (approximately 3,214 reside in the area).

Citywide, single female-headed households comprise 17.6% of all households. The West Side area's households headed by single females account for 13%. Unrelated individuals account for 12% of the area's population, ranking the area third lowest of all the planning areas in both categories.

Recent community meetings on the planning of school facilities indicated a need for an additional middle school in the northern portion of the West Side. APS has plans to build a new middle school, south of I-40 near Unser, to serve some of the students in the southern portion of the West Side.

Additionally, several members of the recently formed West Side Community Planning Partnership have expressed serious concern about lack of planning by APS and a need for the city to work much more closely with them.

Seniors and Special Groups

The area's residents over 65 years of age total 2,022 or about 6% of the population, ranking the area third lowest among the ten community planning areas.

There are few services, primarily provided by private providers, for senior citizens in the area. There are no senior citizen centers nor public housing facilities. An assessment needs to be made of the need for facilities for senior citizens, including housing, recreation, group meeting locations, transportation and meals. One consideration is that although the 1990 Census reports relatively few senior citizens on the West Side, in one or two decades many current residents will need services for seniors.

Citizens with disabilities are a small part of the

population in the area. Of all persons between the ages of 16 and 64, about 2% (531) have mobility/self care limitations and 6% (1,397) have work disabilities.

The homeless population is not evident in the area. There are no service providers for the homeless in the area. Most of the services for the homeless are located in Central Albuquerque where the homeless population is most prevalent.

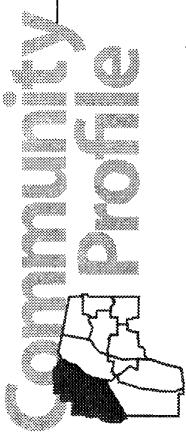
The homeless population is not evident in the area. There are no service providers for the homeless in the area. Most of the services for the homeless are located in Central Albuquerque where the homeless population is most prevalent.

Key Findings:

- The West Side has a high proportion of married couple families, and there are more families with more children living on the West Side.
- The West Side has the second highest proportion among all the planning areas of children under five years of age.
- The West Side has a relatively highly educated population.
- Six elementary and three middle school (two are located outside the area) facilities serve the area. Cibola is the only high school located within the area.
- Recent community meetings on the planning of school facilities indicated a need for an additional middle school in the northern portion of the West Side.
- The West Side Partnership believes educational needs are a priority for the area.

Recommended Actions:

- APS should work with the Community Planning Partnership regarding the need for a new middle school in the northern portion of the West Side and other school facilities to address the growth in the area.
- Assess the need for senior citizen facilities and services in the area.



Community Identity

[Goal 4]	Achieve sustainable development, and balanced development and redevelopment, including infill development.
[Goal 7]	Foster the expression and appreciation of Albuquerque's cultures.

Community Identity

The West Side, greater Albuquerque's fastest growing area, extends from I-40 north to the Bernalillo County northern boundary below the communities of Rio Rancho and Corrales. Bounded on the east by the Rio Grande River, it extends westward to the northwest boundary of Council District 1 and along the Paseo del Volcan to I-40. There are at least four established, major communities that make up the Westside. These include: 1) Seven Bar in the northern portion; 2) Paradise Hills situated north of Paseo Del Norte and west of Coors Boulevard; 3) Taylor Ranch situated directly east of the Petroglyphs National Monument near the intersection of Montano; and 4) Taylor Ranch and Ladera which is situated in an area north of I-40. There are approximately 34 neighborhood associations with Westcliff being the smallest, and Volcano Cliffs being the largest, geographically.

This vast area is largely undeveloped, but new residential and commercial building is taking

Map of Planning Area

place at such a pace that urban design and planning decisions are critical in protecting its unique cultural qualities and spectacular natural setting. Originally open and agricultural in nature, much of the West Mesa was held in large land holdings, either ranches or land grants dating from the 1600's. Heirs of the land grants along with American Indians have ancestral ties to the cultural and natural resources of the area. From the Rio Grande oxbow, rich in wildlife habitat, to the five volcanic cones marking Albuquerque's western skyline, the land itself, not the built environment, has defined the west mesa in the past.

The area contains several unique environmental features important to the entire metropolitan area in terms of physical form and quality of life. These include the volcanos, the petroglyphs, the historic or archaeological areas, the bosque and the views.

The five volcanic cones and several smaller points of eruption form a dramatic skyline and increase awareness of Albuquerque's geologic past. The six lava sheets extending eastward from the cones come to a well-defined edge at the earliest-most sheet. This edge sharply descends to mark the boundary between the volcanic area and the valley slopes and terraces area. The black edge of this lava escarpment stands out on the mesa landscape as one of its most characteristic forms.

The Petroglyphs National Monument takes up a large part of the West Side. The Petroglyph National

Monument was established through federal legislation after years of work by local agencies and individuals dedicated to the preservation of its unique cultural, historical, spiritual and physical features. It is an area covering 7,244 acres in size and includes the volcanos and basalt escarpment areas that were previously part of the City's open space system. The National Monument is of great national and local significance and is both a unique asset and unusual constraint to the urban development planned around its boundaries.

The Bosque, located all along the Rio Grande River is a unique local and Statewide resource. The Bosque transition zone is located east of Coors Boulevard in the portion of the West Side which is north of Central Avenue. The woodland edge is irregular and the topography along the River changes significantly from the steep bluffs found immediately north of Central Avenue to the gradual slopes at Alameda. There are seven formal River access points where most recreational use of the Bosque will occur for West Side residents. These are at: the new La Orilla public access proposed in the Bosque Action Plan for Rio Grande Valley State Park; at the north side of the Alameda crossing; at Central Avenue where access to the new Biological Park will be provided; at the Calabacillas Arroyo; at the southwest corner of Bridge Boulevard; at Rio Bravo; and at La Vega between Bridge Boulevard and Rio Bravo.

As one looks west, cloudscapes, sunrises, sunsets and rugged natural forms and colors provide a

daily, ever-changing panorama. One can look east over the bosque and view the Sandias or the city lights at evening. These scenic vistas provide visual and psychological relief to urbanization and enhance the unique character and appearance of the entire West Side community.

Since most of the new development (up to 60% of the total City) has been occurring on the West Side, it will likely continue to serve as the primary new growth area with sufficient unrestrained, vacant open space west of the Petroglyphs all the way to the Rio Puerco Wash, a distance of about ten miles. Further development, then, of the unique character and identity of the West Side community will depend upon: 1) protecting the natural and historic features of the area; and 2) forcing the design and location of new residential and commercial developments to reflect and enhance the character and feel of the area's natural and historic features, rather than becoming "anyplace, USA." The newly formed West Side Community Planning Partnership can be instrumental in addressing this need.

Key Findings:

- The land itself, not the built environment, has defined the west mesa in the past.
- Some older communities (such as _____) and the Petroglyph National Monument contribute on historical character to parts of the area.
- More homogenous, new residential and commercial building is taking place at such a pace that urban design and planning decisions are critical in protecting the area's unique cultural qualities and spectacular natural setting.
- The West Side Community Planning Partnership is an appropriate body to direct protection of the West Side's Community Identity.

Recommended Actions:

- Develop design criteria and other requirements to preserve the unique cultural, historical, spiritual and physical features, including the views, of the area.
- Incorporate the arroyos as part of the area's open space network that can tie together the larger open space and manmade features as the area develops.
- Identify critical next-steps in the West Side Strategic Plan for fast-tracking with the oversight of the West Side Partnership.

Community Profile



Transportation and Infrastructure

Transportation and Infrastructure

The West Side, area-wise, is the largest planning area. The primary east-west transportation links to the rest of the City are Interstate 40 at the southern edge, Montano and Paseo Del Norte in the central portion and Alameda Boulevard and NM 528 at the northern edge. The primary north-south transportation linkages are Coors Boulevard running parallel to the Rio Grande River and Unser Boulevard from I-40 up to the eastern edge of the Petroglyphs National Monument in the central portion of the planning area.

Transportation is probably the most discussed issue among West Side residents. A viable transportation network, which would not only link the west side of the River to the east, but also serve neighborhoods has not been developed. For over a decade, the River crossing issues remained largely unresolved, pitting one community against another. The explosion of single-family homes has increased pressures on the transportation system.

A full range of transportation opportunities ranging from efficient, cost-effective transit, improved arterial roads, a well-planned system of bicycle and pedestrian trails and alternatives such as car pooling and telecommuting must be found.

As in many other communities, transportation planning has been overtaken by development, a problem exacerbated by environmental, archaeological and land-use considerations. In many cases, transportation decisions are being affected by pressures from the private sector for access to more land to be developed.

Traffic Congestion

The Albuquerque Progress Report (December, 1996) lists only one intersection on the West Side in its top 20 intersections that have the highest demand versus capacity. This is the Paseo del Norte/Eagle Ranch intersection. Vehicle travel demand which exceeds capacity, however, is less a problem for the whole West Side than for other

[Goal 3] For infrastructure, equitably balance new construction, maintenance and repair.

[Goal 5] Increase environmental protection and resource conservation.

parts of the City. The principal arterials on the West Side are at about 68% of capacity; minor arterials at about 45%; and collectors at about 50% of capacity. This suggests, in the overall, that the streets on the West Side are within their capacity as designed. Further access to and through the area began to occur with the adoption of master plans for the communities of Paradise Hills, Rio Rancho, Volcano Cliffs and Taylor Ranch. Street networks were developed in these platted areas. The existence of major land not subdivided between these platted areas, however, has restrained the development of any continuous north-south streets parallel to Coors Boulevard.

The pattern of separate master planned residential communities which developed with an emphasis on access to Coors Boulevard and no emphasis on linking these communities to one another with a north-south system of arterials limits present challenges to provide rights-of-way adequate to overcome the strong dependence on Coors Boulevard. Other constraints arise from topographic features such as major drainage networks, the volcanic escarpment and the River.

Master plans for the area identify Golf Course Road, Paradise Boulevard, Montano Road and 98th Street as arterials and Ellison Drive and others as collectors. These arterials and collectors are not adequate to complete the needed major street network in that they provide service to only specific areas and not to the entire area.

With continued growth, however, the traffic pattern, especially in the Seven Bar area, has changed the demand on the roads and streets systems, such that now the greatest congestion seems to be occurring along Golf Course, especially at McMahon, at least according to neighborhoods in the area. Traffic has increased tremendously since more residential, especially multi-family dwellings, and commercial development has occurred in the immediate area. The West Side Partnership feels the City has allowed apartments to be built without due consideration of the traffic being generated. Traffic connected with the Cottonwood Mall has congested the streets (including the major arterial Coors Boulevard) surrounding the mall and travelers are seeking alternatives routes which do not go through the mall area. Workers, especially at the Intel plant in Rio Rancho, are also using Golf Course Road as a commuting alternative. The travelers to and from the Cibola High School also add to the already heavy, congested traffic in the area. The traffic flow on the West Side is constrained by having only one north-south major arterial (Coors Boulevard) when the traffic pattern suggests that more lanes should be available. Heavy building of apartment complexes in the northwest portion, especially along Golf Course Road, will continue to clog the streets and roads in the area.

The West Side Partnership has expressed concern about the extension of Coors, the congestion at Golf Course and Ellison, and in general about

transportation plans for the area.

The Coors Boulevard expansion project funded in the 1997 GO bond issue has designed the addition of two lanes on Coors between and . This project is due to begin construction in , and be completed by.

Most of the travelers crossing the River do so because of work related reasons. Since the number of river crossings has probably reached its maximum for the foreseeable future with the opening of the Montaño Bridge, development of additional employment and services in village and community centers must be pursued as recommended in the West Side Strategic Plan. As more businesses and jobs are developed on the West Side, the need to cross the River via the automobile should be reduced and stabilize over the long term.

The West Side Strategic Plan contains recommendations which will address all the issues raised here. This Blueprint recommends immediate next steps.

Mass Transit

The Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments (MRGCOG) recently developed daily journey to work data to identify how many commuters were using alternate modes of transportation to get to and from work. Alternate modes of transportation include: mass transit; car pooling; walking and bicycling; etc. The data indicated that although

alternate modes of transportation are available in Albuquerque, over 80% of commuters drive alone to work. The continued dominance of single occupancy vehicles as the primary mode of transportation places stress on both the environment and the street infrastructure systems.

The West Side is no exception when it comes to the use of the automobile as the primary source of commuting. Other alternatives are not yet present on the West Side to provide incentives for commuters to get out of their vehicles to use other forms of travel to and from work. There is presently only one fixed route bus system operating the length of Coors Boulevard. Although Sun Tran has added express service in the last two years and increased ridership, the growth of the area creates need for even more routes, express or otherwise.

Several West Side transit corridors have been identified in the Transportation Evaluation Study (TES) and the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) service plan. These include: NM 528; Coors Boulevard, Coors Bypass; Paseo del Norte; Paseo del Volcan; I-40; and Montano. All of these major roadways will carry transit of some type.

Bike Ways and Trails: Bike routes along City streets can be found on Coors Boulevard from Ladera Drive to Alameda. A combination of bike lanes on-street and offstreet bike trails run along Unser Boulevard from I-40 to Dellyne. The length of Montano and Dellyne in the area also have on-street bike routes. There are several local streets in

the Taylor Ranch area with on-street bike routes.

Commuter Trails:

Bicycle and pedestrian access will be an essential part of community design on the West Side and both modes must increase significantly. Multi-use trails and onstreet bicycle routes are part of the most significant need in the metropolitan area. Many recreational trails and routes exist, but additional linkages between major employment areas are also needed. The West Side Strategic Plan recognizes and endorses all the trail systems already approved in previous plans and has added trails along all the major arroyos on the West Side in order to provide regional east-west connections for non-vehicular travel. The Plan intends for the regional trails to be multiuse and allow for both pedestrian and bicycle travel on paved trails and equestrian travel in unpaved areas.

Double Eagle II Airport (DE II): The Double Eagle II Airport, which is situated directly west of the western boundaries of the West Side community planning area, serves as a general aviation reliever airport for the Albuquerque International Sunport. Increased usage of Albuquerque International (and a tightly confined airport property there) will create significant capacity problems for the International Airport if a reliever airport is not developed. Definitive plans for the DE II have been on hold pending resolution of Paseo del Norte and Paseo del Volcan alignment and

design studies. However, recently a firm was hired to prepare a master plan and an environmental assessment for the DE II. An inclusive process which considers the needs of the Petroglyph National Monument, adjacent communities, local businesses and the public is to be utilized for the planning and design of the DE II.

Water and Sewer

To maximize the efficiency of the water delivery system, the City divides the system into discrete, stand alone trunks which are evaluated individually. The water peak demand and reserve capacity relationship is used to plan water supply requirements for each trunk area. Growth management decisions and economic development opportunities can be assessed relative to existing service area (trunk) capacities to help guide decisions on the general location for future development. Water system reserve capacity is evaluated in terms of individual supply and delivery service area “trunks” comprising the water delivery system. Various wells supply water within each trunk.

An existing deficiency in the Volcano trunk is being addressed through planned installation of new water supply wells included in the City's Capital Improvement Program and by re-routing existing well supplies. The College trunk in the southern portion of the area still has some reserve capacity indicating a satisfactory available supply to support additional growth and development in

the trunk or service area. Additional or extension of wells or trunks to the west of the existing trunks and wells are not being planned at this time.

The City Council in April, 1997 adopted the Albuquerque Water Resources Management Strategy as the City's water supply policy. This represents major water policy changes from those that guided City activities since the 1950's. Among these policies include: pursue and support regional water resources planning and management; develop and fully use its San Juan-Chama and Rio Grande surface water; and fully achieve adopted water conservation goal to reduce per capita use by 30 percent (base period average use is 250 gallons per person per day) by the year 2004.

The recommended strategy represents a shift away from the City's traditional approach of simply pumping more and more water from the local aquifer, much of which is not replenished (a fact which was discovered only recently).

To implement the policies of the Albuquerque Water Resources Management Strategy, the City Council adopted increases to the water and sewer rates as follows: 4.7% for Fiscal Years 1998 and 1999; and 4.5% for Fiscal Years 2000 to 2004. This is equivalent of increasing the typical monthly residential water and sewer bill from about \$32 in 1998 to about \$43 in 2005. Even with these increases, City rates will remain competitive with those utilities operating in neighboring areas such as Rio Rancho and Paradise Hills. The total projected cost

to implement the new policies will be approximately \$193.8 million.

The City's wastewater treatment infrastructure is centered around a single treatment facility (Southside Water Reclamation Plant) located in the South Valley. There is sufficient capacity in the wastewater system to serve approximately 15,000 additional people. New Mexico Utilities, although a private utility company, collects sewage in its service area (primarily in Paradise Hills), and then, by contract, adds the sewage to the City's system for treatment.

Drainage

The West Side Partnership has noted that storm water flow and capacity is an overriding issue on the area. Built drainage and irrigation facilities exist mainly in populated eastern portions of the area. Drainage facilities have been developed to reduce flooding and retard erosion. Several drainage systems are also utilized to lower water tables, thus increasing the agricultural value of lands. Drainage facilities controlled by Albuquerque Metropolitan Area Flood Control Authority (AMAFCA) consist of detention areas, dams, diversion channels and arroyos that control flows from the mesa's eastern slopes. The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) controls drainage on the Rio Grande Valley floor with main irrigation and lateral lines to feed to and from the Rio Grande River.

Key Findings:

- Transportation is one of the most discussed issues among West Side residents in relation to the growth of the area, as improvements to meet demand have lagged behind development.
- The movement of traffic on the West Side is constrained by having only one north-south major arterial (Coors Boulevard). Coors is getting two additional lanes in 1998/1999
- Traffic has increased tremendously since more residential and commercial development has occurred in the immediate area of the Cottonwood Mall.
- Heavy building of apartment complexes in the northwestern portion, especially along Golf Course Road, will continue to clog the streets and roads in the area.
- Business and job development on the West Side are key to reducing the need to cross the River via the automobile.
- There is presently only one fixed route bus system. It operates along the length of Coors Boulevard. The continued dominance of single occupancy vehicles as the primary mode of transportation places stress on the environment and street infrastructure systems.
- A full range of transportation alternatives including efficient, cost-effective transit, well-planned system of bicycle and pedestrian trails and alternatives such as car pooling and telecommuting must be developed.
- Street system improvements to provide relief to the limited north-south traffic lanes and to connect I-25 to Unser, should be accelerated.
- The City should take immediate steps to implement the West Side Strategic Plan Recommendations regarding development of village and community centers and the transportation network to connect them with each other.
- The City of Albuquerque should begin immediate discussions/negotiations with adjacent local jurisdictions regarding their fair share of street infrastructure costs for their residents or work force.
- The City should aggressively implement the 1997 the Albuquerque Water Resources Management Strategy.

Drainage Map

Community Profile

Housing

Key Findings:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Side housing is primarily owner occupied and single family units. For 24% of the homeowners in this area (2,134 households), mortgage payments require more than 30% of household income. This is the highest proportion in the City. The City currently has no City-operated public housing facilities on the West Side, but has constructed/rehabilitated two properties with federal funds (Community Development Block Grant) and that property is available to low and moderate income renters.
Recommended Actions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City needs to pursue aggressive implementation of an affordable housing strategy. This should provide mixed income multi-family units and single family houses. The City's policies affecting the availability of affordable housing throughout the built out parts of the city, as well as in the West Side area, should be expanded, and policy changes made where needed.

Housing

According to the Human Services Needs Assessment document by the Department of Family and Community Services, the West Side has the third highest percentage (69%) of owner occupied housing units in the City of Albuquerque.

Both owners and renters in this area have higher incomes, but the portion of their incomes which pay for housing costs shows a different pattern than in other parts of the City. For 37% of renters (1,201 households), housing costs more than 30% of their incomes. This is the third lowest proportion in the City. However, for 24% of the homeowners in this area (2,134 households), mortgage payments require more than 30% of household income. This is the highest proportion in the City. This may be a reflection of the higher cost of owning housing particularly newer, single family units on the West Side since income is relatively high in the area. Even then, the City needs to continue aggressive implementation of affordable housing, acquiring and developing or redeveloping vacant or aban-

[Goal 1] Enhance the basic social contract by enhancing the lives of youth and seniors, supporting the family, fostering and maintaining stable neighborhoods and providing affordable housing.

[Goal 4] Achieve sustainable development and balanced development and redevelopment, including infill development.

[Goal 7] Increase environmental protection and resource conservation.

doned sites (in some cases, in joint partnership with private developers) to provide, in mixed income units (multi-family and single family) when possible, more low and moderate cost housing for both renters and home buyers.

The City currently has no City-operated public housing facilities on the West Side. One property has been rehabilitated on the West Side with federal funds (Community Development Block Grant) through the City's Department of Family and Community Services. That property is available to low and moderate income renters. An similarly funded affordable housing site in the Seven Bar community has eight units available to low income families.

An assessment of the need for additional housing rehabilitation and affordable housing needs to be made to make low and moderate cost housing available to home buyers.

- [Goal 1] Enhance the basic social contract by enhancing the lives of youth and seniors, supporting the family, fostering and maintaining stable neighborhoods and providing affordable housing.
- [Goal 3] For infrastructure, equitably balance new construction, maintenance and repair.
- [Goal 7] Increase environmental protection and resource conservation.

Parks, Open Space, and Trails

Two plans have been adopted which guide the development of trails and bicycle facilities in Albuquerque: the Trails & Bikeways Facility Plan and the Bikeways Master Plan. To guide the acquisition and development of Open Space, the Open Space Facility Plan is in the process of adoption (completion expected in 1998). To date, a formal assessment and discussion of Parks, Open Space and Trail systems by community planning area has not been completed.

Inventory

The Westside's dominant natural features—the volcanoes, the 17 mile long basalt escarpment and the Bosque—are visible from all parts of the urban area and form the visual edges of the Albuquerque urban area to the west. Views of these features and the Sandia and Jemez Mountains to the east and north are important attributes of the area. The

Petroglyph National Monument, City owned open space in the northwest and the Rio Grande serve as visual and recreational amenities for urban area residents as well as visitors. Arroyos have been engineered in a series of dams and channels with relatively wide rights of way, providing off-road trail opportunities and recreational open space. Currently the west mesa includes over 13,000 acres of Open Space, but many more pressing needs for acquisition exist. Open Space helps protect the priceless view in all directions, creates a safe buffer to manage storm water, provides a basis for a badly needed trail network, and offers places for citizens to enjoy and seek relief from the built urban environment.

The Westside has more Neighborhood Parks and volleyball courts than any Community Planning Area. The Westside Community also has more Regional Parks than any other area which include the special facilities of the City's only model airplane field, equestrian complex and shooting range. Mariposa Basin Community Park

provides an attractive 51 acre recreational center in the heart of the Westside Community.

The Westside Community Planning Area contains:

- **30 Neighborhood Parks:** Of the 114 acres of neighborhood parks, 15 acres are developed and individual park sizes range from less than 1 to 12 acres. Facilities found in Neighborhood Parks include: 6 play areas, 5 half basketball courts
- **9 Community Parks:** Of the 98 acres of community parks, 92 acres are developed and sizes range from 1.5 to 51 acres. Facilities found in Community Parks include: 3 play areas, 7 game fields, 10 unlit tennis courts, 1 jogging path, 2 half basketball courts, 1 full basketball court, 5 volleyball courts, 1 outdoor swimming pool with building
- **4 Regional Parks:** Of the 563 acres of regional parks, 226 are developed. Facilities found in Regional Parks include: 1 golf course, 1 shooting range, 1 model airplane field, 1 equestrian center
- **3 Open Space Facilities:** Rio Grande Valley State Park, Petroglyph National Monument Blanchard Property, Las Marcadas II
- **Trails:** Unser, San Antonio, Boca Negra, Mariposa, Riverview

Current and Upcoming Projects

Projects recently completed, currently in progress, or recently funded in the Westside Community Planning Area include: West Bluff Park, Montano West Park, Riverview Park, Mariposa Basin Park, Piedras Marcadas Park, Congress Heights Park, Rinconada Point Park, La Boca Negra Park, Shooting Range Park, Taylor Ranch Community Center, Homestead Circle Park, Laurelwood Park, Ouray Medians, Parkway Park, Parkwest Park, Richland Hills Park, Las Marcadas II Park, Katherine Nicole Park, Hunter's Run Park, Paradise Meadows Park, Tuscany Park, Presidio Park, Ventana Ranch Park 7B, Ventana Ranch Community Park, and Westside Trail Connections. In addition, the following projects may receive funding through the City's Quarter Cent Tax: San Antonio Oxbow Marsh, Northern 1/3 of North Geologic Window, Blanchard Property, Atrisco Terrace, Piedras Marcadas Pueblo Ruin Buffer Lands, Calabacillas Arroyo, Volcano Cliffs, Northern Sand Dunes and, an Open Space site near the Westside, North Rio Puerco Escarpment.

Next Steps in Park, Open Space and Trail Planning

Currently in progress is the development of a Public Information Document describing existing park, open space and trail facilities by individual Community Planning Areas. The document also

includes general information about the park, open space and trail development processes in the City of Albuquerque and related issues including general cost information and typical funding sources. Upon completion of this document, a more detailed planning process will proceed with each community planning area. Meetings will be held with individual community planning partnerships to gather public input about existing park, open space and trail facilities as well as to determine future needs within each area.

Related Issues

See the Transportation section for a discussion of Commuter Trails.

Community Profile

Crime and Safety



Community Profile

Crime and Safety

[Goal 1] Enhance the basic social contract by enhancing the lives of youth and seniors, supporting the family, fostering and maintaining stable neighborhoods and providing affordable housing.

[Goal 2] Improve public safety services

The Albuquerque Police Department (APD) recently had a study completed by the Center for Opinion Research of the University of New Mexico to gauge attitudes toward the APD. They asked respondents how they rated crime in relation to other social concerns which included Jobs and the Economy, Public Education, Drug Abuse, Environmental Quality and Public Health Care. A majority of the respondents (55 percent) considered Crime to be the single, biggest problem facing residents of Albuquerque today.

However, when each planning area's perception of the crime problem is analyzed separately, the West Side's crime problem is considered the least serious of the areas. Similar results were found for crime related activity, such as problems with gangs, spray painting, litter, drugs and drinking.

Key Findings:

- The West Side's crime problem is considered the least serious compared to the other planning areas including crime related activity, such as problems with gangs, spray painting, litter, drugs and drinking.
- In six selected categories of reported crimes for 1995, West Side's crime rate was in the lower range of the City's as a whole.

Recommended Actions:

- Continue to enhance the community-oriented policing activities for all neighborhoods on the West Side to keep the criminal activity down.
- Apply the concepts and principles of the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) in urban design and development considerations.

In terms of the actual incidents of crime, the incidences of crime on the West Side is considered below average for the City/County as a whole. Although there are certain West Side neighborhoods which are subject to frequent increases in

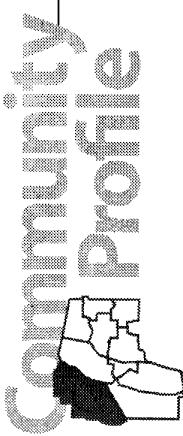
crime, no one neighborhood experiences abnormally high incidences of crime. In six selected categories of reported crimes for 1995, West Side's crime rate was in the lower range of the City's as a whole. These categories are: DWI; drug/narcotic violations; burglaries/breaking and entering; drive-by shootings; gang-related homicides; and juvenile violent crimes.

Police Stations

The West Side Substation on Los Volcanes Road, NW, is the hub for the area's police activity. A mini-substation is also located at the Cottonwood Mall primarily for the mall area.

Fire Protection

There are two fire stations serving the West Side: one near Coors Boulevard and Sequoia (Fire Station 17) and the other near Montano and Taylor Ranch (Fire Station 18).



Community, Business, and Job Development

- [Goal 3] For infrastructure, equitably balance new construction, maintenance and repair.
- [Goal 6] Adopt and pursue implementation of an economic vitality strategy.

On the Westside, there is one job for every four persons, while on the east side of the River, there are two jobs to every four persons. The majority of people who live on the West Side are crossing over the River to the east side to work since most of the jobs are located on the east side of the River. To lessen the commuting and traffic pattern of going across the River for jobs, the West Side Strategic Plan calls for more job development on the Westside.

The West Side has a regional employment center (Cottonwood Mall) in the Seven Bar Ranch community in the northern portion of the area. There are pockets of local retail centers in various parts of the area, such as at Taylor Ranch and along Coors Boulevard. The commercial sector is still developing to a large extent following new residential development in the area. According to the West Side Strategic Plan, activity centers are to be located in strategic sites to encourage dense, mixed use development instead of the continuation of strip development as seen in other parts of the City.

Apartment type complexes are going up in all parts of the area. Some offices are being developed near the commercial areas. Cottonwood Mall, although bringing more employment into the area, has created traffic jams on the north-south routes through the area.

Industrial space is minimal on the Westside. Nowhere on the West Side is a site specifically designated for industrial use. This is probably due to the lack of a sufficient transportation network in support of industrial uses.

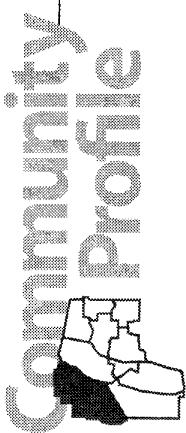
Of the working age population on the West Side, 76% are in the labor force (highest in the City) and about 5% (894) are unemployed (third lowest).

Key Findings:

- On the Westside, there is one job for every four persons while on the east side of the River, there are two jobs to every four persons.
- The majority of people who live on the West Side are crossing over the River to the east side to work.
- Cottonwood Mall, although bringing more employment into the area, has created traffic jams, especially on the north-south routes through the area.
- The commercial sector is still developing to a large extent following new residential development in the area.
- Nowhere on the West Side is a site specifically designated for industrial use.
- Of the working age population on the West Side, 76% are in the labor force (highest in the City).

Recommended Actions:

- To lessen the commuting and traffic pattern of going across the River for jobs, the City should accelerate job development on the Westside.
- Activity centers are to be located in strategic sites to encourage dense, mixed use development instead of the continuation of the strip development as seen in other parts of the City.



Environmental Protection and Resource Conservation

- [Goal 4] Achieve sustainable development, and balanced development and redevelopment, including infill development.
- [Goal 5] Increase environmental protection and resource conservation.

The West Side presents several environment and conservation related issues. These include the Petroglyphs National Monument, the various archaeological site, the contamination of the soils (and possibly water) at specific sites, the air pollution and the preservation of the bosque.

one of the greatest concentrations of petroglyphs in North America. A deposition process which creates a dark patina on these volcanic boulders makes them ideal for creating petroglyphs. The petroglyphs range in age from the archaic period to recent times, with most of them belonging to the Pueblo IV period (A.D. 1325 to A.D. 1600). Some

of the petroglyphs have been attributed to the Anasazi culture and to Spanish sheepherders. Ancient agricultural features such as walls, terraces and check dams are also found along the escarpment, along with Native American shrines, rock alignments, lithic tool manufacturing areas, field houses and grinding surfaces.

Neighborhood access points along the edge of the Monument is a concern to the City and the National Monument officials. The West Side Strategic Plan recommends strict controls of access to the Monument. Access points are not to be disclosed in Monument brochures, maps or other literature distributed to the public and such information must not be given out by Monument

The Petroglyphs National Monument

In 1990 Congress established Petroglyph National Monument as an area of national significance. The 7,100-acre monument, acquired by the federal government, is jointly managed by the State and the City of Albuquerque to protect the estimated 17,000 petroglyphs, their cultural context and the natural areas including the volcanoes, canyons, ancient pueblo ruins and other archeological sites and the 17-mile-long basalt escarpment. Many neighborhoods are immediately adjacent to the monument or the other areas of designated open space on the West Mesa.

The volcanic escarpment of the west mesa has

personnel or others providing tours. Only permitted parking are to be established for the neighborhoods adjacent to the Monument if deemed necessary.

Among other requirements related to activities surrounding the National Monument, the West Side Strategic Plan also recommends strict adherence to land use and design decisions to minimize negative impacts upon the Monument.

Archeological Sites

The Westside has an abundance of archeological sites and petroglyphs representing a continuous record spanning over 10,000 years, with some Paleo Indian sites dating back 12,000 years. The

significance of most of the archaeological sites generally lies not in their long term preservation, but in the information they offer. However, subsurface preservation allows for future excavation to occur when better technology is available.

The sedimentary layers of the Rio Puerco escarpment have eroded to expose extensive archaeological sites, many of which date to the Pueblo IV period. Lithic artifacts are also found on archaic sites (5500 B.C. to A.D. 400) along the slope. The Rio Puerco flood plain should also be noted for its numerous lithic scatters.

Currently, only those petroglyphs and archaeological sites located in publicly owned land have any protection from future development.

The Bosque

The majority of the known archaeological sites fall within one of the following physiographic regions: 1) within the floodplain and on the elevated terraces of the Rio Grande River; 2) along the volcanic escarpment of the west mesa; and 3) along the Rio Puerco escarpment and slopes.

Located within the Rio Grande floodplain are several significant Pueblo sites. One of these sites, believed to be the most extensive in the Albuquerque area, is being nominated to the State

Register of Cultural Properties. Another site near Taylor Ranch, dates from the Pueblo IV period and also includes some pit houses from the Basketmaker III period. Of the approximately 225 other known archaeological sites found in this area, ranging in age from 10,000 B.C. to A.D. 1600, at least 30 sites were determined to be eligible for nomination to the National Register.

The woodland environment, the Bosque, along the Rio Grande is a unique local and Statewide resource. This area is important for biological, environmental, historic and recreational reasons. It also provides visual relief from urbanization through one of the most scenic views from the West Side. This area is under the control of several local, State and federal agencies. The local offices of the federal agencies have recently been working on a plan outlining responsibilities for the various functions the Bosque serves such as water

supply, flood protection, drainage, agricultural use, bio-diverse environments, recreation and linkages between the east and west sides of the City and County.

The types of development locating along the east side of Coors Boulevard are critical to the preservation or destruction of the Bosque transition zone and the important views of the area. Development of West Side design guidelines called for in the West Side Strategic Plan should recognize this and establish separate height, color, massing and style requirements for the area east of Coors. The goal of these requirements will be to allow views over, between and past new development to the Bosque and the Sandia Mountains in the distance. Tree preservation requirements will apply in this area as well to prevent careless clearing of mature woodland areas.

The City should also investigate the potential for purchase of certain key parcels of land which could be leased back for agricultural use or used for recreational purposes. Additionally, the existing rural subdivisions which have already developed, such as Alban Hills, should be precluded from future zone changes which would increase the density or allow commercial uses. The existing rural subdivisions provide an important role in buffering the Bosque from higher density development.

Public and private access points to the Bosque may conflict with the objective of Bosque preser-

vation. Therefore, a careful balance between access to the Bosque and preservation of the Bosque should be sought.

Views

The panoramic views to and from the West Side are defined by community residents as one of the primary assets of the area. Views to and from the volcanic escarpment, views along major arroyos, views of the Bosque, views of the Sandias, view of the volcanoes and views of the ceja and the expanses of the far west mesa must all be preserved to the greatest extent possible. To do this will require specific setback, height and building massing limitations, as these design elements are most critical to views.

Two areas of views are very critical and are at risk from near-term developments. They are the views of the Bosque and the Sandia Mountains from the east side of Coors Boulevard and the views to the from the volcanic escarpment from the adjacent areas. These two view areas are currently governed by the Coors Corridor Plan and the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan.

Air Quality

The air quality of the West Side is particularly affected by blowing dust in the spring and mid-winter inversions which cause build-ups of air pollutants generally caused by automobile use.

The air quality of the area is the most fragile environmental factor.

Airport/Traffic Noise

The Double Eagle Airport will be a major source of noise within the area. Airport noise levels have been mapped for the area. The areas encompassed by noise contours are exposed to airplane noise levels which affect their land use suitability. Other noise factors that characterize the area are the Albuquerque International Airport and Kirtland Air Force Base. Although, air traffic noise from these sources is apparent, the noise does not affect land use suitability. Roadways may also be a major contributor to noise issues within the area, especially the major arterials, such as Coors Boulevard.

Noise

Although traffic noise contours have not been mapped for the major roads in the area, a study using Federal Highway Administration traffic sound projections model indicates that 67db(A) could be exceeded at the right-of-way line along major streets and minor arterials carrying in excess of 15,000 ADT in the area by the year 2000. Major existing roads in the area are I-40, Coors Boulevard and New Mexico 528.

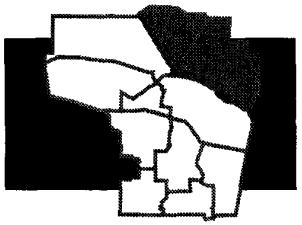
Key Findings:

- The Westside has an abundance of archaeological sites and petroglyphs representing a continuous record spanning over 10,000 years, with some Paleo Indian sites dating back 12,000 years.
- The volcanic escarpment of the west mesa has one of the greatest concentrations of petroglyphs in North America.
- Only those petroglyphs and archaeological sites located in publicly owned land have any protection from future development.
- The panoramic views to and from the West Side are defined by community residents as one of the primary assets of the area.
- The air quality of the Westside is particularly affected by blowing dust in the spring and mid-winter inversions which cause build-ups of air pollutants generally caused by automobile use.
- The Double Eagle Airport will be a major source of noise within the area.
- Roadways may also be a major contributor to noise issues within the area, especially the major arterials, such as Coors Boulevard.

Recommended Actions:

- Protect and preserve all the natural features of the area through various regulatory requirements.
- Limit access points along the edge of the Petroglyphs National Monument and do not disclose access points in Monument brochures, maps or other literature distributed to the public.
- Require strict adherence to land use and design decisions to minimize negative impacts upon the Monument.
- A careful balance between access to the Bosque and preservation of the Bosque should be sought.
- The types of development locating along the east side of Coors Boulevard are critical to the preservation or destruction of the Bosque transition zone and the important views of the area and, therefore, separate height, color, massing and style requirements for the area must be established.
- Tree preservation requirements should also apply in the Bosque area to prevent careless clearing of mature woodland areas.
- Have the City purchase certain key parcels of land in the Bosque area which could be leased back for agricultural use or used for recreational purposes.
- Preserve the views to the greatest extent possible.

**the West Side
Community's
Priority Issues**





Priority Issues

The priority issues are growth-related and they include:

1. Traffic congestion, especially along Golf Course, McMahon and Ellison.
2. Overcrowding of schools and a need for new schools.
3. Drainage and Water: Need for more drainage facilities in newer areas of the West Side; adequate supply of water to sustain development on the West Side.
4. Development of parks.

A combination of strategies will address these important issues and they include:

1. Revisions to sector plans, facility plans, and design overlay zones, etc.
2. Transportation plan focused on land use decisions, especially the village and community center concept.
3. Design guidelines for village and community centers.
4. Concurrency issues regarding development.
5. Establish a task force to identify alternatives for development in the Volcano Cliffs area.